

leaders, literacy advocates, and the many members of the New Haven Free Public Library as they gather to celebrate the organization's 125th Anniversary. This is an extraordinary milestone for this very special City landmark.

Following the passage of legislation authorizing its establishment and with a funding allocation of only twelve thousand dollars, the New Haven Free Public Library opened its doors on February 21, 1887 offering twenty-six newspapers and eight periodicals to its first patrons. By June of that same year, circulation of the Library's thirty-five hundred volumes began—and they have gone strong ever since.

Libraries are an integral part of our communities. Most of us can remember that unique feeling of holding your first library card and checking out your first book. Over the course of time, libraries became central gathering places for community members—in fact, in many towns across the country libraries are still home to town meetings and social gatherings. The New Haven Free Public Library is no different.

Housing scores of volumes from biographies to fiction, science to current events, libraries have always been a place where adults and children alike can allow their imaginations to run wild. Over the course of its 125-year history, the New Haven Free Public Library has not only been home to a growing collection of literary work, but within its walls the doors of opportunity have been opened to many. Literacy programs, computer learning classes, and many more innovative programs and services have been offered to support the members of our community.

The New Haven Free Public Library represents the very best of our community. That they are celebrating their 125th Anniversary—that the community has always ensured its availability to its citizens—is testament to its special place in all of our lives. It is part of our past, present and future and I am proud to join all of those gathered today in celebrating this very special occasion. I have no doubt that the New Haven Free Public Library will continue to serve our community well for generations to come.

## STATEMENT ON H.R. 2117

**HON. EARL BLUMENAUER**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 28, 2012*

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I voted against H.R. 2117, the "Protecting Academic Freedom in Higher Education Act." This bill infringes on the duties of the Department of Education and it undermines efforts to reduce fraud and waste within the federal financial aid system.

The legislation would prohibit the Department of Education from issuing regulations regarding the definition of a credit hour and regulations requiring institutions of higher education to comply with the state laws in which they offer educational services. In effect, it undermines efforts to demand accountability in the federal financial aid system. There is a clear federal interest in establishing consistent definitions for a credit-hour, the underlying unit used to determine federal financial aid benefits.

In addition, requiring institutions of higher education to continue to register with the state where they teach distance or correspondence classes will help ensure that basic accountability standards are being met. We have a responsibility to taxpayers to ensure that the institutions receiving support through the financial aid system are in compliance with state laws. This bill restricts the Department of Education's attempts to reduce fraud and waste within the financial aid system, and makes it difficult to ensure that our financial aid systems support the institutions that are effectively educating tomorrow's workforce.

The institutions in my district will benefit from a more fair financial aid system, as it will ensure long term viability of the system and protect their students' access to the very important financial aid benefits.

## IN RECOGNITION OF STEVEN W. WALDO

**HON. JACKIE SPEIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 28, 2012*

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Brisbane City Councilmember Steven W. Waldo for his 18 years of service to the people of Brisbane. During his four terms as the Mayor and five terms as the Mayor Pro Tem,

Steve used a keen and analytical mind on every issue that he confronted. He has the rare skill of bringing discussions to a vote.

I met Steve in 1989 when he first ran for City Council and have witnessed his years of tireless dedication to our community and to public affairs on the San Francisco Peninsula. He personifies the can-do attitude of the residents of Brisbane who love their small town.

Steve has been a driving force in maintaining Brisbane's character and the quality of life for all residents. He has worked hard to balance Brisbane's thriving economy with the preservation of the town's natural beauty.

Steve deeply appreciates the pristine open space on San Bruno Mountain. One of his long-lasting accomplishments was the preservation of over 3000 acres of open space to protect the endangered Calippe Silverspot and Mission Blue butterflies. The City Council revised the design for 37 single-family homes on the Northeast Ridge after weeks of public input and discussions with the council and the planning department. It was the first time a community in the United States had developed a habitat conservation plan, HCP, and it served as a model for an amendment to the Endangered Species Act.

In the early 1990s the town was proposing to build a city hall in the center of town. Steve advocated successfully to create a community park instead. Today that park is a popular location for picnics and concerts that are bringing the community together.

Around the same time a proposal for a casino on Sierra Point didn't sit well with Steve. He campaigned against it and the proposal was soundly defeated.

Steve is also an enthusiastic and tenacious advocate for education. He has fought for the local schools and worked closely with the school district to ensure that future generations had access to quality education.

Steve, a native of Palo Alto, graduated cum laude from Harvard College in 1970 and earned a law degree from Hastings College of Law in 1974. He worked for 24 years at the law firm of Severson & Werson in San Francisco and for 10 years as chief legal officer of CPP, Inc., a publishing company in Mountain View.

Steve and his wife of 30 years, Patricia Franklin Waldo, have three daughters, Amanda, Rebecca and Hilary, and one son, Lloyd Stevens Waldo.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this body to rise with me to honor the life and work of Steve Waldo who has made the city of Brisbane a better place for residents and visitors alike.